

Study Guide
Evolution
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Artistic Genre: Music/Jazz

Alabama Touring Artist Program

presented by the Alabama State Council on the Arts

This Study Guide has been prepared for you by the Alabama State Council on the Arts in collaboration with the performing artist. All vocabulary that is arts related is taken directly from the Alabama Course of Study, Arts Education. With an understanding that each teacher is limited to the amount of time that may be delegated to new ideas and subjects, this guide is both brief and designed in a way that we hope supports your school curriculum. We welcome feedback and questions, and will offer additional consulting on possible curriculum connections and unit designs should you desire this support. Please feel free to request further assistance and offer your questions and feedback. Hearing from educators helps to improve our programs for other schools and educators in the future.

Please Contact:

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Set up:

Artists typically arrive 60 minutes before their scheduled performance in order to set up. Please have the space available to the artist as soon as he arrives.

All artists will need some kind of setup prior to arrival. Please communicate with the artist to discuss needs. Before arrival, please make sure floors are clean, and any electrical hook ups are in place for the artist. If he has asked to use your amplification system, please have it ready for a sound test as soon as the artist arrives. Please provide a staff person to assist the artist with set up.

Role of the Audience:

Although many students may not choose to pursue professional careers in the arts, many will choose to remain lifelong participants in, and learners of, the arts. A role that all students may play is that of an appreciative, responsive audience member. This role is one that has lifelong value to the learner as well as to the performer. Learning appropriate audience behavior is an integral component of all of the arts education areas. Positive audience qualities are part of the overall goal of *Achieving Excellence Through Arts Literacy*.

- Alabama Course of Study: Arts Education; 2006

Role of the Audience (continued):

Appropriate audience behavior includes sitting still and being very quiet during the performance. Audiences clap at the end of particular sections of the performance, or when they see something amazing that they want to tell the performer they really like. If a performer takes a bow, that is always a time to clap. You should not clap to music unless the performer asks you to. It is never appropriate to talk during a performance, unless in this instance the artist asks a question. We ask teachers and students to practice these rules of performance etiquette during the Alabama Touring Program productions.

What to expect:

This presentation is a concert style performance with a question and answer session at the conclusion. There may be some songs where the students (and teachers) are asked to participate by clapping or singing along.



We love visiting the students because it is an opportunity for us to do something far more important than just entertain. It is a chance to teach and share, not only information about music and the history and mechanics of it, but also what music means to us as individuals and the importance it has in our lives. We also enjoy meeting young people and getting their perspective on what they hear during the performances and how it impacts their lives. We get a lot of energy from the student's enthusiasm and it inspires us as much as, we hope, the presentation will inspire them.

Historical Background:

Fifty years ago, our country and our state were in a struggle to make sure that all people had equal rights. The future of our country and our commitment to freedom for all was at stake. The events during that period of time would be known as the Civil Rights Movement and it was a very important moment for America. The whole world was watching to see if this country, that pledged, “Liberty and Justice for all” would make good on its promise. Music played a part in this powerful Movement and helped to define the period and the feelings of Americans of all backgrounds. Some of it was functional as it provided the rhythm for marches and some songs gave strength, encouragement and inspiration to others. Musicians wrote about what was going on with songs of protest and some looked to God and spiritual themes in writing songs that would help heal our nation and its people.

Websites you might visit:

<http://ctl.du.edu/spirituals/freedom/civil.cfm>

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/civil-rights-movement/essays/%E2%80%9Cpeople-get-ready%E2%80%9D-music-and-civil-rights-movement-1950s>

<http://folkmusic.about.com/od/toptens/tp/CivilRightsSong.htm>

<http://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/99315652/songs-of-the-civil-rights-movement>

Curriculum Connections:

1. History - Civil Rights Movement (1950 - 1970)
2. Language Arts - Study of the lyrical content (poetry) of songs performed and discussed.
3. Music - Study of the importance of songs with a connection to the Civil Rights Movement.
4. Social Studies - Impact of the Movement on America and its citizens.
5. Civics - Legislation that was passed as a direct result of the Civil Rights Movement.

Vocabulary:

Definitions Taken from

http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/history_of_jazz.htm

The Blues - Born in the South (late 1800's), the blues is an African American derived music that recognized the pain of lost love and injustice and gave expression to the victory of outlasting a broken heart and facing down adversity. The blues evolved from hymns, work songs, and field hollers - music used to accompany spiritual, work and social functions. Blues is the foundation of jazz as well as the prime source of rhythm and blues, rock 'n'roll, and country music. The blues is still evolving and is still widely played today.

Jazz - Jazz began in New Orleans in the early 1900's. New Orleans had a great tradition of celebration. Opera, military marching bands, folk music, the blues, different types of church music, ragtime, echoes of traditional African drumming, and all of the dance styles that went with this music could be heard and seen throughout the city. When all of these kinds of music blended into one, jazz was born." —Wynton Marsalis

Syncopation - a rhythm created by an emphasis or accent placed on a beat or subdivision of a beat that is not usually emphasized.

Improvisation: The Expression of Freedom

Improvisation is the most defining feature of jazz. Improvisation is creating, or making up, music as you go along. Jazz musician play from printed music and they improvise solos. From the collective improvisation of early jazz to the solo improvisation of Louis Armstrong to the free jazz of Albert Ayler, Ornette Coleman, and John Coltrane, improvisation is central to jazz.

Students should know (continued):

Suggested Activities to do before the performance:

1. Begin with a discussion: ask students to define and explain the goals of the civil rights movement and the concept of equal rights.
Conduct interviews with parents, relatives and neighbors about what songs they remember from the civil rights era and how this music reflected the times.
2. Examine the top-selling songs from the early 1960s.
3. Analyze the lyrics to one or more songs from the period and draw some conclusions concerning the message behind the song(s). Some suggested songs are: "Blowin' in the Wind"- Bob Dylan (1963), "A Change is Gonna Come"-Sam Cooke (1964), "This Little Light of Mine"- Various Artists and Performances (1950s and 1960s), "I've Been 'Buked and I've Been Scorned"- Mahalia Jackson at the March on Washington (1963)
4. Look up other periods in our nation's history; research music from the period; Listen to and analyze the music in relation to the social and political climate of the time.

Suggested activities to do after the performance:

1. Reflect on the presentation with some of these questions: How did the impact of the music and the historical perspectives offered affect your previous perspectives? How did the performance affect feelings about freedom and civil rights? Has interest in the Civil Rights changed at all because of this performance? Why? Why not?
2. Compare the music heard during the performance with the original versions of popular civil rights era songs and discuss the similarities and differences. Explore possible reasons for these differences. Is it okay to change songs from their original version? Why? Why not?
3. Compare and contrast popular music of today with the music of the 1960's. Identify examples of music written recently that share the same purpose, such as songs of protest, and calls for action. What conclusions may be drawn from these discoveries?

Post-performance activities (continued):

4. Consider a current social or political issue. Decide where you stand on that issue. Then write lyrics for a song that might be created to voice your position; or to question the position of others. Describe the music that you would write to accompany these lyrics.
5. Study Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" and think about what this means in relation to what you have experienced in the music of the 1960's. Why do people sing?

Reflective Questions to explore with students:

1. What is the purpose of music? What does music offer in expression that is not possible in any other form?
2. What tools are used in music to communicate ideas? The elements of music include rhythm, pitch, tempo, quality or texture, melody, harmony, etc. What do these words mean to you and how are they used to communicate? What do they communicate?
3. When we are young, people use music to help us remember things (like the order of the letters in the alphabet). Why do you suppose this is done?
4. Think about this live production and how it relates to recordings you may listen to on an Ipod or even music videos you may watch on TV. What are the similarities? What are the differences? Which do you like best? Why?
5. What did you notice while listening to the music? Try to list anything that you observed?
6. Why does this group have the number of musicians that you see here today? What part did each person play in creating the entire effect? What would it have been like without one of those musicians?

Finally: If you are looking for a writing assignment we love getting letters from students. Especially those that answer some of these questions.